of the total number of farmers in the country. Large farmers with 10 hectares and above constitute hardly 2 per cent of the total number of farmers in the country. The steps taken by the Government to improve the conditions of farmers include special concession/subsidies to small and marginal farmers under various schemes like Integrated Cereal Development Programme for Rice, Wheat % Coarse Cereals, which have since been subsumed under the macro-management scheme so as to give flexibility to States to take up activities as per local requirements.

(d) and (e) The National Agricultural Policy has underscored the need for ensuring remunerative prices for agricultural produce through the announcement of Minimum Support Price (MSPs) for major agricultural commodities. In keeping with this commitment, the Government have been announcing MSPs for kharif and rabi crops. In order to compensate the farmers for the losses suffered in unirrigated areas and the additional expenditure incurred in irrigated areas on account of severe drought this year, the Government also announced a special drought relief price ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per quintal for the kharif crops of 2002-03 season.

Oilseds production in Andhra Pradesh

3140. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite being a major oilseeds producing State, the production of oilseeds in Andhra Pradesh has decreased considerably, during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise;

(c) the main reasons for decrease in the production; and

(d) what incentives are being given and how Government propose to motivate the farmers of Andhra Pradesh, to take up cultivation of oilseeds, in a big way?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The production of oilseeds in Andhra Pradesh has declined during last three years as compared to the production during 1998-99. The production of oilseeds in Andhra Pradesh during last three years is given as under:

Year	Production (000 tonnes)
1999-2000	1375.2
2000-2001	2390.4
2001-2002	1583.0

(c) The main reasons for the decline in the production of oilseeds in Andhra Pradesh during last three years are that drought conditions which prevailed in the State and attack of pests and diseases on some of the oilseeds crops.

(d) To increase the production of oilseeds in the country including Andhra Pradesh, a Centrally Sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) is being implemented in various states including Andhra Pradesh. Under the scheme financial assistance is provided on various inputs like production and distriburion of seeds, distribution of seed minikits, distribution of improved farm implements, sprinkler sets, rhyzobium culture, micro nutrients etc. in order to motivate the farmers to take up the cultivation of oilseeds on a large scale.

Fall in sale of fertilizers

3141. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sale of fertilizers had fallen considerably during the Kharif season, due to severe drought experienced in several parts of the country and as a result, the agricultural production is likely to decline; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The sale of major fertilizers in the country *viz* Urea, Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash (MOP) was lower by approximately 6%, 20% and 15% respectively in Kharif, 2002 over the Kharif, 2001 due to drought in serveral parts of the country. As per the First Advance Estimate the production of foodgrains is placed at 90.64 million tonnes during Kharif, 2002 against 11.51 million tonnes during Kharif, 2001.